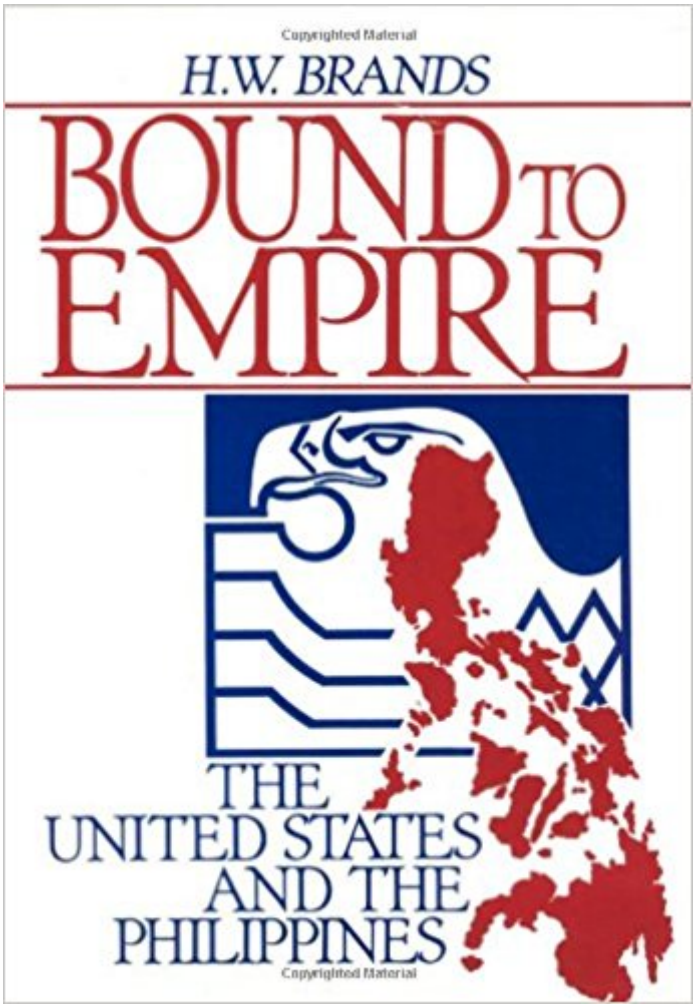
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Bound To Empire: The United States And The Philippines



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Synopsis

From the day Commodore Dewey’s battleships destroyed the Spanish fleet at Manila to the closing of the Subic Bay naval base in 1992, America and the Philippines have shared a long and tangled history. It has been a century of war and colonialism, earnest reforms and blatant corruption, diplomatic maneuvering and political intrigue, an era colored by dramatic events and striking personalities. In Bound to Empire, acclaimed historian H.W. Brands gives us a brilliant account of the American involvement in the Philippines in a sweeping narrative filled with analytical insight. Ranging from the Spanish-American War to the fall of Ferdinand Marcos and beyond, Brands deftly weaves together the histories of both nations as he assesses America’s great experiment with empire. He leaps from the turbulent American scene in the 1890s--the labor unrest, the panic of 1893, the emergence of Progressivism, the growing tension with Spain--to the shores of the newly acquired colony: Dewey’s conquest of Manila, the vicious war against the Philippine insurgents, and the founding of American civilian rule. As Brands takes us through the following century, describing the efforts to "civilize" the Filipinos, the shaping of Philippine political practices, the impact of General MacArthur, and World War II and the Cold War, he provides fascinating insight into the forces and institutions that made American rule what it was, and the Republic of the Philippines what it is today. He uncovers the origins of the corruption and nepotism of post-independence Philippine politics, as well as the ambivalence of American rule, in which liberal principles of self-determination clashed with the desire for empire and a preoccupation first with Japan and later with communism. The book comes right up to the present day, with an incisive account of the rise and fall of Ferdinand Marcos, the accession (and subsequent troubles) of Corazon Aquino, the Communist guerrilla insurgency, and the debate over the American military bases. "Damn the Americans!" Manuel Quezon once said. "Why don’t they tyrannize us more?" Indeed, as Brands writes, American rule in the Philippines was more benign than that of any other colonial power in the Pacific region. Yet it failed to foster a genuine democracy. This fascinating book explains why, in a perceptive account of a century of empire and its aftermath.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

From the U.S. annexation of the Philippines in 1899 to independence in 1946, through a century of American domination, the relationship between the two has been a study of power--military, economic, and political. This thoughtful, well-conceived, and superbly written volume is perhaps the best in the string of books on the U.S. role in the Philippines. Clearly it is the most scholarly. Previously, Stanley Karnow's In Our Image (LJ 4/1/89), Fred Poole and Max Vanzi's Revolution in the Philippines (LJ 7/84. o.p.), and Stephen Rosskamm Shalom's The United States and the Philippines (LJ 9/15/81. o.p.) have all examined the relationship. The importance of the islands was nowhere more evident than during World War II. The Philippines were also crucial to American anti-Communist strategy from the Cold War to Vietnam. Brands (history, Texas A&M) provides a careful analysis of the people and events that shaped U.S. colonial policy. A well-researched and -documented monograph, this is bound to find a place in all libraries. Strongly recommended.-Boyd Childress, Auburn Univ. Lib., Ala.Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"Brands has written a fascinating chronicle of the Philippine-American relationship over the past century. He skillfully weaves together the domestic, regional, and international forces that shaped the two peoples' destinies from colonialism to independence and beyond. His scrupulousscholarship and lively style make this volume far and away the best history we have of America's controversial experiment with an Asian empire."--Michael Schaller, author of Douglas MacArthur: The Far Eastern General"Brands tries for nothing less than a history of America's role in the whole Cold War. You many not agree with him, but you'll find yourself hooked by his wry, witty style and plauge-on-both-their houses insights."--St. Louis Post Dispatch"This thoughtful, well-conceived, and superbly written volume is perhaps the best in the string of books on the U.S. role in the Philippines."--Library Journal"Insightful and informative."--Booklist

Well written, the depth and detail of research comes through on each page. Illustrative of the

struggles of multiple presidential administrations and what to do with the unanticipated consequences of acquisitions from the Spanish American War. The book reveals the complexity of political issues that developed in the Pacific rim countries over an extended period of time well before WWI and WWII that led to the inevitable US participation in the Pacific. H.W. Brands captures the true character of many influential men in history such as Taft, Harding, and T. Roosevelt before and during their presidency and their influence on US policy in the Philippines; and military icons Leonard Wood and Douglas MacArthur. Brands captures the mark these men leave on the Philippine Islands and the Philippine people. It is not a flattering look at US history, but it is factual and supported by documents in the National Archives. This helps to understand the complexity of the US and Philippine relations up to and beyond independence. Brands provides insight of prominent Philippine leaders such as Aguinaldo, Osmena and Quezon and their influence in Philippine politics. If you enjoy reading what's "behind" the historical events, this book is for you. I have both the hard bound and Kindle versions and found I read the Kindle version more often.

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